



FOR GOD AND COUNTRY

SEWARD POST 5 NEWSLETTER

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COMMANDER'S COMMENTS

By Clare Sullivan

Here we are in spring and we are over 16 hours of daylight and gaining!!!! Woohoo!!!!

Well, we thought April was going to be a slower month since it is the pre-tourist month and we only had a few items planned but as "per SOP" we had lots going on particularly the amazing work our outstanding volunteers did on the building! This American Legion Family has some real talent out there and it shows every time we look at our building. You all totally "rocked" this building project, and total kudos to Tom Sears for the excellent planning for the work and coordinating and ordering the huge amount of supplies to make it happen.

We started the month with a wonderful Easter Celebration that was well attended by our American Legion Family and many in the community and closed out the month with the 99th Department of Alaska Annual Convention.



The Post 5 Family had an excellent representation from all our organizations and to top it off the Post 5 Family won the coveted **Unity Award!** For those who don't know it is an award for the post that demonstrates the best cooperation and cohesiveness in working together throughout the year in service to our veterans and the community, and it looks like we made it happen! Thank you and congrats to all our organizations - this is a really big deal!

I want to thank everyone for their hard work and dedication irrespective of what you have been able to do - it does not go

unnoticed and every little bit helps immensely. And, as you can see it pays off with the distinct honor of this award and recognition and accolades we received. I was thrilled we had good representation from the Post 5 Family to receive this this award on behalf of our organization. Thank you for all you do for our veterans and for Seward.

Now we're into May and it will be a busy month! We'll be cooking up a storm and having

Mother's Day Breakfast on 13 May to honor our Moms.

We will also be celebrating **Armed Forces Day** down in

the Harbor with the Chamber of Commerce on 19 May during the **Harbor Opening Weekend** and the 2nd **Annual Mermaid Festival** going on at the same time. We'll be cooking up hot dogs, beans potato salad, etc. so come on down for a free lunch and enjoy a little camaraderie.



Toward the end of the month we will be really busy with the **Armed Services YMCA Combat Fishing Tournament**. We will

be partnering with the Armed Services YMCA, the Fishing Charter Boat Association in Seward, and other local businesses



to give a heroes' welcome and good time for those military members from JBER who have participated in the conflicts in Afghanistan and other areas of conflict. These warriors will be treated to a fun day of fishing and some good eats after they have taken in their haul of fish!



Following all the earlier activities, we'll be rolling into the end of the month and we will be remembering those servicemen and women who have passed before us on Memorial Day at our traditional locations at the

American legion Cemetery beginning at 1100 hrs.

Once the ceremonies are over we will be having lunch at the post for all in attendance. It will be another day that we can honor our comrades who have answered the final call and still share a good meal with those who remain.

Now back to convention info.....other than handing out awards at the convention, we benefitted by receiving information on programs and participating in a variety of committees that move the American Legion in Alaska forward. Of particular note were the presentations on **Boys' State** and the **Oratorical Contest Program**.

Boys State is a program geared for boys between 11th and 12th grade. The purpose of this program is to develop leadership skills and citizenship interest.



Boys State a long existing

American Legion Program beginning in 1937; it is held in June for a week in each state. Boys participate in and function as governmental entities. This helps them learn about government and its process. Participants are first divided up into subgroups referred to as cities. The citizens of each of these cities elect mock municipal officials and representatives to the mock state legislature. The participants also elect state officials, such as governor, lieutenant governor, and other state-level officials that their real state has. The legislature meets to organize, elect leaders, and to pass bills, in a way that is similar to how their actual legislature operates. Depending upon how it is organized some programs tend to have a more traditional education focus, providing speakers and training throughout the week and then concluding with mock political functions. Other programs take a more hands-on approach by running the mock government activities all week.

Boys State is staffed by Legion members and community leaders who volunteer their time and effort. Administrative costs are defrayed by the local post. So there is no fee to the student participant. Although recruitment procedures vary, Boys State participants are often selected with the help of high school principals or guidance counselors, however this is not necessary, an interested high school junior can directly contact the post and we can give them more information.

Of note, participants learn quite a bit of information on the government process which is class normally required for those in the pursuit of an undergraduate degree. Important to remember, those who participate generally are first considered for available scholarships. Think about it, this is a win-win program, the participant gets to involve himself in an opportunity that will benefit him in life and educational opportunities as well as positions him for financial support for further schooling.

Graduates!



The American Legion Auxiliary sponsors a separate but similar program for young women called Girls State.

Successful completion of Boys State and Girls State is recognized by employers, service academies and university admissions boards as an indicator of strong leadership and character traits. Many colleges and universities offer scholarships or admission preference to attendees of Boys or Girls State programs.



The **Oratorical Contest** is a "Constitutional Speech Contest."

The American Legion Oratorical Contest exists to develop deeper knowledge and appreciation for the U.S. Constitution among high school students. The program has presented participants with an academic speaking challenge that teaches important leadership qualities, the history of our nation's laws, the ability to think and speak clearly, and an understanding of the duties, responsibilities, rights and privileges of American citizenship. The program has featured numerous politicians and prominent contestants over the years, including former president candidate Alan Keyes and Fox Business Anchor Lou Dobbs.

The overall national contest winner gets an \$18,000 scholarship. Second place takes home \$16,000, and third gets \$14,000. Each state winner who is certified into and participates in the national contest's first round receives a \$1,500 scholarship. Those who advance past the first round receive an additional \$1,500 scholarship. The American Legion's National Organization awards the scholarships, which can be used at any college or university in the United States.

Speaking subjects must be on some aspect of the U.S. Constitution, with some emphasis on the duties and obligations of citizens to our government. Speeches are eight to 10 minutes long; three- to five-minute speeches on an assigned topic also are part of the contest.

The Oratorical Contest is normally held at the local post in January to compete at the state to move on to the national competition.

House and Vice Report.....

By Mike Calhoon



Hello from the Second Vice/Club, April has sped by, but Summer is taking a bit longer to get here than we thought it would.

I cannot thank everyone enough for all the volunteer hours given in service to Post 5 in April. Though not a busy month of normal activities it was a very busy month for the Post siding renovation project.

There were way too many volunteers to mention everyone but rest assured, your dedication and effort did not go unnoticed. There were Post members, Auxiliary members, SAL members, USCGC Mustang crewmembers, and volunteers from the community not affiliated with the Legion at all. How gratifying and humbling it has been for me to see all of you step up, give up your time, effort, and money to help us work on our Post home. So many of you could have been doing other things for yourselves but you chose to support this Legion Family. I am truly grateful for all your efforts and you should be proud of the great work accomplished by all.

This month you will have more opportunities to help Post 5 as we host Mother's Day breakfast, Armed Forces Day, Third Sunday breakfast, Combat Fishing Tournament, and Memorial Day. Also, we will begin cemetery clean-up and we will paint the Arch at the entry to the cemetery. We will also have a bit more work on the building exterior to finish the siding.

The Commander will talk about the 99th Department Convention but I would like to thank Connie Kullander, Melody Moline, Michelle Swartz, Suzi Towsley, and David Osborn for taking care of the Club while I attended the Convention. It was a great experience for me which I would not have had without your help.



The 2018 membership year is rolling along and some of you have not renewed. Please consider renewing your membership if you have not done so. We are checking for 2018 membership cards when you come in the club. Membership is the foundation for everything we do. A larger and active membership helps us plan more ways to assist our veterans and the community of Seward.

Pool, poker, and bingo are all going strong so come on in and enjoy some good food, drinks, and harassment from the bar staff. May 5th will be the Pool League final night.

Remember, those of you on the **Building Committee**, the next meeting is on **Tuesday, May 1st at 7:00pm**.

Thanks to all of you who continue to support your Post and all the activities designed to support our membership, our veterans, and the community. We look forward to seeing you all and please feel free to call if you have any questions or concerns.

Sounding Off from the Sons....

By Mike Calhoon



Wow!! April has flown by and we have reached the busiest month for our Post 5 Family.

First, I would like to thank all the volunteers from Squadron 5 who put so much time and effort into the Post siding renovation project. There are too many to mention without forgetting some but I must give special thanks to David Osborn and Bill Wolfe for their almost daily efforts for two weeks plus some. Also, a big Thank You to David Dieckgraeff for the use of the Pettibone for the duration of this project. Huge expense lifted from the Post for the donation of that equipment.

The character and strength of Squadron 5 continues to grow and strengthen. The dedication to the goals of Post 5 is truly satisfying to see. Few Squadrons do as much for their respective Post homes as Squadron 5 and I am proud to be a member of this organization.

This month we will be looking to help the Post with Mother's Day breakfast, Armed Forces Day, Third Sunday breakfast, Combat Fishing Tournament, Memorial Day preparations, and more work on the Post building. Come help and see what your squadron is doing.

The 99th Department Convention was attended by David Dieckgraeff who is again the Detachment of Alaska Commander and Bill Wolfe who was elected as a Detachment of Alaska Executive Committeeman and was appointed to the Service Committee. Congratulations to both of you and thank you for your support of the SAL.

Also, we are deep into the 2018 membership year. Thank you if you have already renewed your dues and, for those who have not done so, please consider taking care of that. Membership drives everything we do. A strong Squadron membership makes the Post 5 Family that much more capable of serving our veterans and the community of Seward.

Thank you again for all your hard work and support of the Post 5 Family mission of service to the veterans and other community members in Seward.

If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact me at 224-5440. Thanks again for all your support of the Post 5 family and I look forward to seeing you all around the Post.

From the Presiden'ts Desk.

By Debbie VanTassel

Wow! Where did April go? Just got back from the 99th Department of Alaska Convention in Anchorage and have so much to share. Unit 5 was well represented and those of us who went learned a lot, did a lot of networking with ladies from other units and most of all- came back with a renewed energy and enthusiasm for helping our veterans, children and youth and community service.

Congratulations to Connie Kullander and Sharon Dillon who were presented with 100 hour pins in recognition of the hours of service they provide to our veterans. A sincere thank you to Sharon and Connie for all that you do to help our veterans.



Congratulations to **Angel Schwertfeger** - Angel was elected as the Department of Alaska Honorary Jr. Auxiliary President for the upcoming year!



Thank you **Angela Schwertfeger** for taking charge of the poppy poster project- it is a beautiful poster.

We nominated **Michelle Oliver** as our Unit member of the Year. Michelle has done so much for the Unit the last 2 years when she served as Unit President. She is always at the Post helping out with the numerous projects that are going on and she is frequently helping with Bingo. Thank you for everything you do Michelle.

Lori Wolfe will be serving as the Chairwoman of the Public Relations committee this year. How exciting!!! To be working Public Relations as the Legion prepares to celebrate it's 100th Birthday. It will be a lot of work but should be so rewarding.



On April 21st the Unit recognized two of our Jr. Auxiliary members at a graduation ceremony. **Billy Wolfe and Elena Hamner** both turned 18 and were eligible to become full members of the Auxiliary.

Congratulations Billy and Elena we are proud to welcome you to the "Sr." Auxiliary and look forward to many years of continued service by both of you.

I also want to thank all the volunteers who donated time and labor to help with the Post renovation project. It is still in process but the building is looking fabulous, the new siding makes such a big difference. We had several Unit members who helped-thank you! Thank you!

May is going to be a busy month with lots of projects and programs.

Poppies, Poppies, Poppies! The Unit will be placing poppies on the crosses to place at the American Legion Cemetery. We will also be distributing the poppy cans out in the community to collect donations for our veterans.

The annual **Combat Fishing Tournament is May 24th**. This is such a wonderful event to honor our active duty military from JBER. It is a lot of work to make this happen so if you have some time to volunteer please come down and help-

Harbor Opening Weekend- we need help at the Harbor serving hot dogs and hamburgers- remember this is a great way to get community exposure and remind them of all that the Legion family does for the community.

And Memorial Day celebrations- this is our time to say Thank you to all those who have served and especially those that made the ultimate sacrifice for our country. One of the things that I brought back from convention was a renewed passion for what the Auxiliary is all about- honoring and remembering our veterans who have given so much of themselves for our country, helping our families and youth especially those of military families and serving our community.

Each Unit member has joined the Auxiliary to honor the service of a veteran or active duty military member. In honor of that veteran or service member, I challenge each Unit member to find their passion-whether it is helping a veteran by giving them rides to medical appointments, or just going and visiting a veteran so they are not lonely, educating our youth or serving our community.

For me I joined to honor my father who served in World War II. He was extremely passionate about flag etiquette and proper respect when the Pledge of Allegiance was being recited or the National Anthem was being played. My passion this year is to follow my father's passion and to educate children about the Pledge of Allegiance and proper flag etiquette. What is your passion going to be? Find one and let us know what you are doing! As a Unit we do so much but we can always do more.

The official flower of the Military Child is the Dandelion-Why? Dandelions put down roots almost anywhere and it is almost impossible to destroy. It is an unpretentious plant, yet good looking. It is a survivor in a broad range of climates. exciting adventure full of new friends and new experiences.



Military children bloom everywhere the winds carry them. They are hardy and upright. Their roots are strong, cultivated deeply in the culture of the Armed Forces...planted swiftly and surely. They are ready to fly the breezes that take them to new adventures, new lands and new friends.

Military children are well-rounded, culturally aware, tolerant, and extremely resilient. They have learned from an early age that home is where their hearts are- that a good friend can be found in every corner of the world.

They learned that to survive means to adapt- that the door that closes one chapter of their life opens up to a new and Unit Members- thank you for all you do in service of our veterans.

Memorial Day Poem Flanders Fields

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie,
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.



"Taps"

Composed By Major General Daniel Butterfield
Army of the Potomac, Civil War

Of all the military bugle calls, none is so easily recognized or more apt to render emotion than the call Taps. The melody is both eloquent and haunting and the history of its origin is interesting and somewhat clouded in controversy. In the British Army, a similar call known as Last Post has been sounded over soldiers' graves since 1885, but the use of Taps

is unique with the United States military, since the call is sounded at funerals, wreath-laying and memorial services. Taps began as a revision to the signal for Extinguish Lights (Lights Out) at the end of the day. Up until the Civil War, the infantry call for Extinguish Lights was the one set down in Silas Casey's (1801-1882) Tactics, which had been borrowed from the French. The music for Taps was adapted by Union General Daniel Butterfield for his brigade (Third Brigade, First Division, Fifth Army Corps, Army of the Potomac) in July, 1862.

Daniel Adams Butterfield (31 October 1831-17 July 1901) was born in Utica, New York and graduated from Union College at Schenectady. Despite his lack of military experience as the superintendent of the American Express Company when the Civil War broke out, he rose quickly in rank. A Colonel in the 12th Regiment of the New York State Militia, he was promoted to Brigadier General and given command of a brigade of the V Corps of the Army of the Potomac. The 12th served in the Shenandoah Valley during the the Bull Run Campaign. During the Peninsular Campaign Butterfield served prominently when during the Battle of Gaines Mill, despite an injury, he seized the colors of the 83rd Pennsylvania and rallied the regiment at a critical time in the battle. Years later, he was awarded the Medal of Honor for that act of heroism.



As the story goes, General Butterfield was not pleased with the call for Extinguish Lights feeling that the call was too formal to signal the days end and with the help of the brigade bugler, **Oliver Willcox Norton**, wrote Taps to honor his men while in camp at Harrison's Landing, Virginia, following the Seven Day's battle. These battles took

place during the Peninsular Campaign of 1862. The call, sounded that night in July, 1862, soon spread to other units of the Union Army and was even used by the Confederates. Taps was made an official bugle call after the war. As the years went on many more versions were created. There are no official words to the music but here are some of the more popular verses:

"Fading light dims the sight,
And a star gems the sky, gleaming bright.
From afar drawing nigh -- Falls the night.

"Day is done, gone the sun,
From the lake, from the hills, from the sky.
All is well, safely rest, God is nigh.

"Then good night, peaceful night,
Till the light of the dawn shineth bright,
God is near, do not fear -- Friend, good night."

"TAPS" is customarily played at funerals at Arlington national Cemetery as well as at ceremonies at the Tomb of the

Directors Notes...

By Bobby Dunno



Speaking of riding this May there are some rides coming up and to stay up to date I will endeavor to get the information on the ALRA Facebook Page and the Legion Rider website alaskalegionriders.org. The first of the organized rides does not belong to us. The Combat Vets will be holding their annual Kenai Peninsula Poker Run on the 19th of May, that is the same day as Armed Forces Day which we will have our own Bike Blessing. The annual Byers Lake run on Memorial Day. The ALR's first organized ride is the **Wounded Hero's Escort** on the 8th-9th of June. All of these can be fun and support worthwhile causes so I encourage you to attend and participate. We have already completed our first Ice Cream run of the year but I am sure that provided that the weather gives us a break there will be more with a few rides for Pie...hopefully stay in touch for more info on times and meeting places.



Remember our ALR meetings will be on the first Thursday of each month will be a lot to discuss. Some of the most important items on the agenda being the ALRA State Officer Elections and will we plan on holding the dessert auctions this year the last Friday of the month from May through August. We also saw at the 99th American Legion Department of Alaska convention a couple of resolutions that could affect the ALR in the future.



They have started a new ALR Chapter at Post 28 in Anchorage. Regardless of what's going on the good news is the days are getting longer and sooner or later the roads will dry up, so get on the prep work, make sure the plugs are not fowled, charge the batteries and warm them up 'cause we are counting down the weeks until we can all Get On Our Bikes And Ride!

Memorial Day



Memorial Day was originally started as an event to honor Union soldiers, who had died during the American Civil War. It was inspired by the way people in the Southern States honored their dead. After World War I, it was

extended to include all men and women, who died in any war or military action.

Memorial Day was originally known as **Decoration Day**. The current name for this day did not come into use until after World War II. Decoration Day and then Memorial Day used to be held on May 30, regardless of the day of the week, on which it fell. In 1968, the Uniform Holidays Bill was passed as part of a move to use federal holidays to create three-day weekends. This meant that that, from 1971, the Memorial Day holiday has been officially observed on the last Monday in May. However, it took a longer period for all American states to recognize the new date. It is traditional to fly the flag of the United States at half- mast from dawn until noon.



Memorial Day Trivia:

- Memorial Day is a day of remembrance of those who have died serving our country.
- General John Alexander Logan ordered the Memorial Day holiday to be observed by decorating the war dead.
- On Memorial Day, the flag should be at half-staff until noon only, then raised to the top of the staff.
- Red Poppies are recognized as the Memorial Day flower.
- "Taps" is often played at ceremonies on Memorial Day.
- Memorial Day was first called "Decoration Day" because of the practice of decorating soldier's graves with flowers.
- New York was the 1st state to officially recognize Memorial Day.
- Flowers and flags are the two most popular items people use to remember soldiers.
- The south refused to honor the dead on Memorial Day until after World War I when the meaning of Memorial Day changed from honoring civil war dead to honoring Americans who died fighting in any war.
- Memorial Day was declared a federal holiday in 1971.

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May 2018



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		Mexican Martes 1	2	3	Steak Night 4	5
 ARMED FORCES DAY		Building Committee Meeting 7pm	Guest Chef Night 	ALR Meeting 7pm 		Pool League End of Season Dinner
6	7	Mexican Martes 8	9	10	Steak Night 11	12
"Texas Hold 'em" 6PM Luscious Leftovers	OMAHA POKER 6PM Luscious Leftovers BINGO!!!! 6:30PM 	Post Meeting 7pm 	Auxiliary Meeting 7pm 	SAL Meeting 7pm 		Cemetery Clean Up 10:00 am
MOTHERS DAY 13	14	Mexican Martes 15	16	17	Steak Night 18	19
"Texas Hold 'em" 6PM Luscious Leftovers Mom's Day Breakfast	BINGO!!! 6:30PM OMAHA POKER 6PM Luscious Leftovers		Guest Chef Night 			Armed Services Day and Harbor Opening 2nd Annual Mermaid Festival Cemetery Clean Up 10:00am
20	21	Mexican Martes 22	23	24	Steak Night 25	26
Community Breakfast "Texas Hold 'em" 6PM Luscious Leftovers	OMAHA POKER 6PM Luscious Leftovers BINGO!!!! 6:30PM 		Combat Fishing Captain's Dinner 	Combat Fishing Tournament & Dinner 		Cemetery Clean Up 10:00am
27	MEMORIAL DAY 28	Mexican Martes 29	30	31		
"Texas Hold 'em" 6PM Luscious Leftovers	BINGO!!! 6:30PM Luscious Leftovers OMAHA POKER 7PM 		Guest Chef Night 			

